



Redesign Plan

Academy of Southfield

Academy of Southfield

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Academy of Southfield was initially a private elementary school. In 1995 it became a charter school authorized by Central Michigan University. The academy currently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The school is physically located in Southfield, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit, but over 90% of the students who enroll are residents of Detroit. Many parents choose to send their students to our school via the school bus service. Others who work near the school transport their children to and from school as a part of their daily commute. The school has been operating as a charter for almost 20 years. While about 25% of our students are new every year many of our families choose and recommend our school because of their history here and because it offers a safe environment and convenient location for their children's education.

The free and reduced lunch population has been increasing steadily over the last 10 years with the majority of our students eligible for free lunch. The school and all staff are aware of and sensitive to these issues, often providing extra supplies, uniforms, and food to families that need extra help. The free and reduced lunch population has declined for the first time during this 2013-2014 school year. Our school will continue to provide assistance for parents through partnerships with community businesses and agencies who sponsor clothing and food drives, hearing and vision screenings, dental care, and access to eyeglasses.

Although the majority of the students live in Detroit, the Academy of Southfield is tucked back in a quiet neighborhood in the city of Southfield. The Academy is located in Oakland County, 13 miles northwest of Detroit, easily accessible by several major expressways. Southfield has a population of 71,739, as of the 2010 Census, with a racial make-up of approximately 70% African American, 25% Caucasian, and 5% from other races.

The Academy of Southfield is still challenged by the continual movement of new students throughout the school year. Providing diversified instruction creates challenges of constant reassessing which we are addressing through the administration of computer adaptive testing that defines what students already know and what needs to be taught from year to year. Despite the inherent challenges, the entire staff is dedicated to providing a quality education in a caring atmosphere. Parents are comfortable with the family like learning environment at the Academy of Southfield.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

Academy of Southfield's vision, mission, and beliefs statements have been created to ensure all students reach their full potential.

Vision Statement

Academy of Southfield will provide a quality education that ensures all students, regardless of ability levels, will achieve their academic and social potential.

Mission Statement

The Academy of Southfield is committed to providing a rigorous academic foundation within a safe, caring, and stimulating environment. High standards for student success are encouraged through innovative instruction strategies that address diverse needs and learning styles.

Students are empowered to continue their educational experience in order to reach their full potential.

Beliefs Statement

We believe:

- Students should be provided with a safe and secure learning environment
- Teachers, parents, and community must work together for student success
- The needs of diverse learners are addressed through differentiated instruction

The purpose of the Academy of Southfield is to provide a quality education within a safe, caring, and stimulating environment. Our expectations for students are high so that they will become lifelong learners. We offer many academic, as well as social programs to involve our students in a variety of experiences. The activities that are included as a part of our educational program include afterschool tutoring, summer school, choir, foreign language, track, basketball, and cheerleading. The school celebrates success through quarterly honors assemblies and kindergarten and 8th grade promotion ceremonies. Our choir has opportunities to perform at assemblies, holiday programs, and other events.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Notable Achievements:

Perhaps most notable achievement is Academy of Southfield's transition to self-management under the guidance of their board. This change has been 2 years in the making and will provide the opportunity for reform that will support the improvements needed for our students' academic success.

To support these reforms the entire school will be using NWEA's Primary Foundation assessments for grades K and 1 and MAP assessments for grades 2-8. These computer adaptive tests will provide teachers, students, and parents with the specific information that all stakeholders can use for improvement.

Areas for improvement:

Improvement in % of students achieving state performance standards in all four content areas

All students having goals to achieve their best in testing.

Complete implementation of Common Core State Standards in Reading and Math

Improve response time, parent support, and teacher implementation of support services for lowest achieving students

Improvement of Parent communication using communication technology.

Improve community awareness through Penny Drive and food and clothing drives.

Improve parent involvement in students education through multiple meaningful activities.

Improve regular and timely student attendance.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Nothing additional at this time.

Priority School Assurances

Introduction

All priority schools are required to certify yes/no to each of the following assurances and upload a copy of the required documentation in ASSIST.

Priority School Assurances

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
Teacher Evaluation Tool	Our district has implemented an evaluation tool, that includes a significant connection to student growth, to assess the effectiveness of teachers.	Yes		Teacher Evaluation Tool Page 1 Teacher Evaluation Tool Page 2 Teacher Evaluation Tool Page 3

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
Administrator evaluation tool	Our district has implemented an evaluation tool, that includes a significant connection to student growth, to assess the effectiveness of leaders.	Yes		Administrator Evaluation Tool

Operational Flexibility Assurance

Introduction

To ensure that all priority schools are in compliance with the required Michigan Department of Education Assurances it is required that acknowledgement and submission of certain documentation be completed.

Assurance of Operational Flexibility

All identified Michigan priority schools must complete and submit the following operational flexibility assurances as part of their Redesign Plan no later January 30, 2014.

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
	Our school assures the Michigan Department of Education that under our current collective bargaining agreements, board policies, and operating procedures that the school building has the authority and autonomy to implement all redesign plan requirements as written. This assurance requires that schools upload either an Executed Addendum or a Memorandum of Understanding as evidence on the following screen.	No	This is a single building school, there is no collective bargaining.	

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
	<p>Our school has an executed addendum to the districts applicable collective bargaining agreements which includes all the following elements required by Section 8 of the MCL 380.1280c:</p> <p>Section (8) An addendum to a collective bargaining agreement under this section shall provide for any of the following that are necessary for the applicable school intervention model to be implemented at ____ School.</p> <p>(a) That any contractual or other seniority system that would otherwise be applicable shall not apply at ____ School. This subdivision does not allow unilateral changes in pay scales or benefits.</p> <p>(b) That any contractual or other work rules that are impediments to implementing the redesign plan shall not apply at ____ School. This subdivision does not allow unilateral changes in pay scales or benefits.</p>	No	This is a single building school, there is no collective bargaining.	

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
	Our school has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining the commitment to hold a negotiated addendum meeting to address requirements of Section 8a of MCL 380.12080c	No	Our school does not have a Memorandum of Understanding.	

Redesign Plan

Academy of Southfield

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
	Our Local Educational Agency (LEA) will comply with all applicable requirements, policies and conditions for implementing the Reform/Redesign Plan. The LEA understands that if it fails to develop an approvable plan, or does not make satisfactory progress on the plan implementation and/or student achievement, the Michigan Department of Education/State School Redesign Officer may issue an order placing the school under the control of the State School Reform/Redesign School District (SSRRD). If the school is placed under the control of the SSRRD, under Section 6 of the MCL 380.1280c, the SSRRD will impose for the school one of four intervention models and impose an addendum to applicable collective bargaining agreements in effect for the school as necessary to implement the school intervention model as required by Section 8 of the MCL 380.1280c.	Yes		Redesign Plan Signature Page

Transformation Redesign Diagnostic

Introduction

The Transformation Model addresses four specific areas: 1) developing teacher and school leader effectiveness; 2) implementing comprehensive instructional reform strategies; 3) extending learning and teacher planning time and creating community-oriented schools; and 4) providing operating flexibility and sustained support. Overall, you will write a reform/redesign plan to address eleven separate requirements. The reform/redesign plan should be developed for implementation through the 2015-16 school year.

PART A: REFORM TEAM PERSONNEL

Please list the individuals involved in the development of this reform/redesign plan. Use a separate line to list each individual, and include name, title or role, and email contact information.

Phyllis Ross, Building Principal, pross@academyofsouthfield.com

Jackie Anderson, Teacher Leader, janderson@academyofsouthfield.com

Susie Raines, Teacher Leader, sraines@academyofsouthfield.com

Jessica Marietti, Teacher Leader, jmarietti@academyofsouthfield.com

Sandy Russ, Teacher Leader, sruss@academyofsouthfield.com

Dr. Erma Gibbs, ISD/ESA School Improvement Facilitator, School-Based SIF: ermajgibbs@yahoo.com

Jan Callis, ISD/ESA School Improvement, OS Project Leader, jan.callis@oakland.k12.mi.us

Ronnie Phillips, District Representative(s), rphillips@academyofsouthfield.com

Garnett Green, Intervention Specialist, ggreen@msu.edu

PART B: TEACHING AND LEARNING PRIORITIES

State two or three “big ideas” for your reform/redesign plan that are intended to change teaching and learning in ways that promote student growth in your school.

Based on Academy of Southfield's School Improvement Plan, Needs Assessment and Perception Data, one big idea for the reform/redesign plan is Professional Learning Communities. The PLC's will facilitate discussions centered on the four core subjects to improve instruction, promote deeper understanding of standards, curriculum and analyze data to improve students achievement. This is substantiated in *Getting Started: Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities* by Eaker, R., DuFour, R. and DuFour R. Also, it states that PLC's support one another and share strategies and materials as they work together to accomplish goals that they could not achieve by working alone. Eaker and DuFour continue discussing how to establish and operate successful PLC's and understand how to determine their effectiveness. Richard DuFour believes that every professional in the building must engage with colleagues in the ongoing exploration of three crucial questions that drive the work of those within a professional learning community: "What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? And how will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?" Finally, in *What Works in Schools* by Robert Marzano discusses the importance of teachers collaborating and making decisions about student achievement.

The teacher will have daily common preparation periods of an hour to collaborate, plan and discuss the progress of the students. Also, they have a half hour common lunch period to collaborate. In addition, they have ninety minutes weekly after school to meet, collaborate and plan to improve teaching and learning. According to Paul D. Houston, Alan M. Blankstein, and Robert W. Cole "to help teachers to help all students is to engage all teachers in professional learning communities" is the purpose of providing professional learning communities. The second big idea is all students will become proficient in ELA. The MEAP data from the 2013/14 school year indicates that Academy of Southfield students fell below the state average in reading at all grade levels, except fifth grade. The fourth and seventh grades took the MEAP writing test last year, and both scored below the state proficiency average. Teachers will teach, model, and practice comprehension skills that proficient readers use to make sense of rigorous texts associated with Common Core Standards. Research cited from Silver, Harvey, Dewing, Thomas R., Perini, Matthew (2012), *The Core Six: Essential strategies for Achieving Excellence with the Common Core*, ASCD. Teachers will develop students' writing skills required for building Common Core writing skills: higher order thinking through writing, writing in the text types of arguments or opinions, informative/explanatory text, narrative, and writing for a wide range of tasks, audiences and purposes.

Douglas Reeves has found that writing is "the skill most directly related to improved scores in reading, social studies, science and mathematics." The research is aligned with why we have selected to improve the ELA skills.

State what data were used to identify these ideas

School Improvement Plan
Comprehensive Needs Assessment
Perception Data
MEAP
MAP

PART C: DEVELOP/INCREASE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Requirement #1: Replace the Principal and increase leadership capacity at the school.

Indicator 1A: In your response, describe how the district has taken on of the following actions: (a) a new principal has been hired that meets all five turnaround competencies, (b) the current principal meets all five turnaround competencies, and (c) a principal with turnaround competencies will be hired before the end of the planning year. *Note: (a) and (c) are the only options if you plan to apply for a School Improvement Grant.

Indicator 1B: Describe how the district will increase leadership capacity. Ensure that this plan addresses at least one of the big ideas around which this plan is developed.

Academy of Southfield (AOS), a single building district, is now well positioned to achieve success. School leaders realized early in 2014 that AOS was on the verge of being identified as a Priority School. A new governance structure was put in place; the school became self-managed; and the failed rules and routines of the former Management Company were discarded. In August of 2014, the former principal was replaced and new school leader was hired. In selecting a new principal, the leadership at AOS sought a person with competencies that matched the levels needed for the challenging job ahead. An experienced leader was needed to implement a transformation model and aid the school in exiting "priority school status." The new principal is now in place. She is an experienced leader; meets all five turnaround competencies; and has a track record of success. She served as principal of a Blue Ribbon School, a Golden Apple School, and a Skillman Foundation "High Performing" School. Her last assignment was at an elementary building identified as a "Priority" school. Under this principal's leadership, the school exited priority status within two years. It was evident that this principal had confidence and desire to achieve. She appeared to be a problem-solver with ability to work with and through others - crucial "turnaround competencies" needed at AOS.

Change is now underway at AOS. With the aid of the superintendent and the new principal, an achievement-oriented staff is hard at work. The principal is concentrating on achieving results; motivating performance, solving problems and influencing behavior. For example, the principal has instituted increased time for teacher-to-teacher and teacher-principal collaboration. This was accomplished through regular staff meetings, grade level meetings, cross-grade teacher meetings, common preparation times and duty free lunch periods. Collaboration is becoming the norm and teachers participate in school, curriculum, and classroom decision-making. Professional learning activities are being collaboratively planned. Teachers chair committees and are showing a willingness to share ideas, plan ahead and work hard to improve achievement (identify and focus on early wins and big payoffs). School teams identify and implement best practices and share information with one another. Gone is teacher isolation and a culture of top-down decisions mandated to the teaching staff (breaking organizational norms). The principal is visible in classrooms. She coaches; she listens and helps teachers make instructional decisions. She constantly encourages staff to try new tactics, discard old rules and routines that don't work and to do more of what actually works (act quickly in a fast cycle). The "data dialogues" conducted at AOS have led to powerful data conversations. The principal is providing time for teachers to understand data from multiple sources and talk openly about what supports they need to make rapid changes in their classroom (collect and analyze data). AOS staff have identified "Big Ideas" that are essential for providing focus to the content being delivered. Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) and PD 360 are being used to foster collaborative learning among teachers and other stakeholders (galvanize staff around big ideas).

While leadership is widely recognized as a crucial factor in school improvement, the principal cannot do this work alone. Leaders of high achieving schools are committed to building strong leadership teams. They continually focus on student achievement and promote a culture of change despite barriers, (i.e. time, resistant staff, lack of support, etc.) They move quickly on change and improvement efforts and serve as leadership role models. Principals serve as team builders and coaches and give ongoing attention to building a safe environment for open and honest discussion of issues. Teams have the opportunity to tackle short- and long-term challenges. They become more and more self-directed in meeting their goals. Team members learn how to hold members accountable for their performance on the team. AOS staff is well

SY 2014-2015

on the way to replicating the best of what is known about building leadership capacity. The superintendent, principal, school leaders and other teaching staff will be the primary beneficiaries of capacity building efforts. Through meetings, conferences and professional learning opportunities, school leaders will increase their skills and collaborate with other professionals on issues related to leadership. The principal, in turn, will support the work of school teams and leadership activities. Similarly, teachers will have professional development opportunities in the area of leadership. They will serve as team leaders and committee chairs. They will be provided time to attend conferences and workshops and serve as trainers. Teachers will be able to lead PLC meetings, grade level planning sessions and change activities. The staff has time built into their daily schedules to collaborate; to plan, and make decisions.

Supporting increased leadership capacity at AOS will be resources provided by MDE, an Intervention Specialist, the Oakland ISD, and the school's authorizer, CMU. These entities provide consultants, data conversations, coaching support, workshops, webinars, training materials and feedback focused on building leadership capacity. Additionally, leadership capacity- building at AOS supports two of AOS's big ideas, namely, "teachers must have more opportunities to learn, model and practice new skills and receive feedback" and "every school professional must be engaged in the work of improving school achievement in the four core subject areas." Increasing the leadership capacity of AOS professionals extends and expands skills and knowledge and aids the staff in improving their practice while simultaneously supporting increased achievement in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies.

Requirement #2: Use rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation systems for teachers and principals.

Indicator 2A: In your response, detail the collaborative process used to create a teacher evaluation plan and explain how the evaluation includes student growth as a significant factor (by 2015-16, at least 50% of teachers' evaluations must be based on student growth). Attach the teacher evaluation and Administrator Evaluation.

Indicator 2B: In your response, detail the collaborative process used to create a leader evaluation plan and explain how the evaluation includes student growth as a significant factor (by 2015-16, at least 50% of leaders' evaluations must be based on student growth). Attach the teacher evaluation and administrator evaluation.

During the 2015-16, the AOS Board and Superintendent will formally adopt and implement a rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation system for its teachers and principal. The system will: (a) evaluate the teacher's or administrator's job performance at least annually using multiple rating categories with student growth serving as a significant factor; (b) establish clear approaches to measuring student growth; (c) provide timely and constructive feedback to teachers and administrators to encourage improvement in their professional practice. To further develop and refine the existing AOS evaluation system, during the 2014-15 school year, a committee comprised of the Superintendent, the principal and teacher representatives met together to review the existing evaluation system. This committee also collaborated with the Oakland ISD, MDE and AOS teachers to ensure that the evaluation process reflected best practices and included input of the staff to be evaluated. The goal was to focus upon behaviors that directly impact teaching and learning. School leaders understand that teaching is a very complex process and worked to reflect in the AOS Evaluation system, procedures and activities that involved staff in their own evaluation and promoted clear and meaningful conversations about teaching and leading in the educational arena.

An example of an activity that involved the principal and teachers in their own evaluation and improvement of their professional practice, was allowing the teachers and the principal to develop personal goals for the year, which are subsequently discussed and reflected upon during evaluation conferences. This activity will allow teachers and the administrator to work collaboratively on their growth and professional improvement in areas that are mutually supportive. It was subsequently decided that evaluation tools based on the work of Charlotte Danielson, would be adapted for use as a component of the AOS Evaluation System. The ratings of "highly effective", "effective", "minimally effective" and "ineffective" would be used to rate teachers and principal performance. Student growth (at least 50%) will be a significant factor when rating both the principal and the teachers.

A 2014-15 Teacher Evaluation Tool will be used by the Principal to evaluate teacher performance. Similarly, a 2014-15 Principal

Evaluation Tool will be used by the Superintendent to evaluate the Principal's performance. Both tools will be further improved and refined for full use during the 2015-16 school year. With regard to student growth as a significant factor in teacher evaluation, there are several types of evidence that will be available for examination. These data include MEAP, MAP, DIBELS, Everyday Math, Common Assessments, Journals and Portfolios. Teachers will be trained in Marzano's, Classroom Instruction That Works, during the 2014-15 school year. This will provide teachers with an additional tool to self-monitor best practices within the classroom. In addition, the staff will be trained in the PD360 model which will give everyone additional training in self-evaluation. The Principal will use a walkthrough tool that is based on Charlotte Danielson's module for walkthroughs and reflection. The walkthrough, although not directly tied to evaluations, is a way to give teacher feedback and spur conversation regarding individual growth.

Effective principals are those who boost academic achievement for all students, increase the effectiveness of their teaching staffs, and consistently take leadership actions shown to improve outcomes for students. Therefore, 50% of the principal's rating will be driven by his/her ability to increase student achievement and teacher effectiveness outcomes, with the remaining 50% driven by the principal's demonstration of effective practices and leadership actions. Similar to teachers, the principal will be rated "highly effective," "effective," "minimally effective" and "ineffective" based on performance of the staff and the students. The principal will have options related to professional development including identifying a personal area of growth and a plan for addressing the identified growth area.

It is anticipated, that in the event a teacher or administrator is rated "minimally effective" or "ineffective" for two years in a row and has not improved after participation in mentoring, peer assistance, further training and other forms of support, steps will be taken to dismiss teachers and administrators who appear unable to improve.

Requirement #3: Identify and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff members who have increased student achievement. Additionally, the school will remove leaders and staff members who have been given multiple opportunities to improve professional practice and have not increased student achievement.

Indicator 3A: In your response, identify the strategies that will be used to identify and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff members who have increased student achievement. This process must reward educators for positively contributing to increased student achievement and for implementing the instruction program with fidelity (outlined in requirement #6).

Indicator 3B: In your response, describe how the school will remove leaders and staff members who have been given multiple opportunities to improve professional practice and have not increased student achievement outcomes, and who have not met criteria based on the teacher evaluation system.

Research suggests that rewards for teaching excellence can be effective in attracting and retaining high quality school leaders, teachers and other staff. AOS is working on designing a multidimensional teacher reward system that will be used to identify and reward school leaders, teachers and other staff members who have had a positive impact on student achievement. The school administration, in collaboration with the teaching staff, have formed a committee to research and investigate a fair and equitable means of rewarding staff who increase student achievement. Objective criteria will be established to gauge excellence. A weighted reward system will take into account such factors as student growth as measured by MAP and MEAP; the learning environment; the use of innovative teaching techniques; classroom management; and teacher performance evaluation ratings. Skill in the delivery of the AOS instructional program will also be a major determining factor in distribution of rewards. Effective use of direct instruction procedures and the use of common, research-based routines in ELA and Math are at the heart of AOS's school reforms (See Requirement 6). Credentials earned, attendance rate, participation on teacher teams and willingness to assume leadership roles will also be factors considered in developing a tiered teacher system of rewards. Teacher performance will be evaluated multiple times during the year. The school administration will collaboratively review the data and make award decisions. They will then distribute rewards mid-year and/or at the end of the school year once achievement data and teacher performance data are available.

Using input from staff, teacher leaders and AOS Board members, by the end of the 2015 school year, a system of rewards will be

established. The reward system will contain some form of bonuses or a "bump up" in pay. Release-time; flex-time; payment for travel to state and national conferences; reimbursement for enrolling in professional development or graduate courses are among the types of awards that will be considered. Consideration will also be given to teacher recognition activities such as breakfast or luncheon celebrations; announcements in the media; personalized trophies and plaques; photographs on a school "Wall of Fame." Supporting and publicizing teaching excellence demonstrates that student achievement is of importance and that outstanding performance among staff is valued at AOS. Teachers who improve student achievement deserve to be rewarded. AOS intends to send a signal that the school cares about student success and teacher performance. As school leaders, we care about how effective teachers are with students and the administration plans to recognize exemplary effort.

Removing ineffective teachers at AOS is an important objective. As our President has so aptly stated in an address to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce "from the moment students enter a school, the most important factor in their success is not the color of their skin or the income of their parents - it's the person standing at the front of the classroom." The President expressed what a great deal of research has documented--that teachers have a tremendous impact on student achievement. Chronically ineffective teachers depress student learning and the achievement of the school, in general. AOS has a learning focused- process in place that addresses dismissal of ineffective teachers after two years or less if warranted. Student achievement and delivery of the prescribed instructional program are significant factors on the evaluation scoring tool. The administration notifies all teachers annually that teacher evaluations will be conducted. Teachers identified as "unsatisfactory" using the district's established evaluation criteria are scheduled for a conference. A plan for professional improvement is agreed upon and formal follow- up observations are scheduled. Emphasis is placed upon improving teacher practice and increasing student achievement. Teachers are allowed to set improvement goals and take responsibility for their growth and development. The teacher is provided multiple opportunities to improve including participation in professional learning, coaching, mentoring, and observations of peers and "master teachers." A re-evaluation is subsequently conducted and if the teacher again receives an unsatisfactory rating, h/she is subject to dismissal.

Requirement #4: Provide staff with ongoing, high quality, job-embedded professional development aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional program. This should be designed with school staff to ensure that staff can facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement the school reform strategies.

Indicator 4A: In your response, describe the school's plan for professional development. The plan must: (a) reflect the "Big Ideas" (see Part B), (b) offer repeated opportunities with a common focus, (c) be high quality, (d) be job-embedded (e.g. integrated into the work day), (e) align to the instructional program described in requirement #6, and (f) include a process for monitoring the impact of PD on instructional practices.

Professional Learning (PL) at AOS will be on-going, job-embedded and differentiated. Opportunities and activities will be aligned to standards set by the National Staff Development Council. These standards focus on context, process and content. Context standards are related to the characteristics that must be in place to sustain the effects of the professional development; process standards delineate characteristics that facilitate successful adult change; and content standards identify the knowledge and skills educators need. It is widely recognized that these standards must be addressed simultaneously if PL is to lead to changes in practice and produce high levels of learning for students. Long-term outcomes expected of the AOS professional Learning plans are: an increase in teaching skills and application of these skills to help students learn proficiently; provision of multiple experiences so that staff can improve their practice; an increase in the numbers of students who achieve proficiency in the core academic areas. When the AOS PL plan is fully implemented 1) all professional learning will be linked to student and teacher needs; 2) staff will use data from multiple sources to drive instruction 3) there will be continuous opportunities to examine, observe, practice, collaborate and receive feedback on the use of effective instructional strategies.

Early in the school year, in preparation for developing a professional learning plan that would address context, process and content, the teaching and administrative staff together reviewed its CNA and achievement trend data; examined existing plans (Title I, SIP, etc.) They

participated in professional dialogues and data digs. The "Big Ideas" that emerged that will guide and align the school's PL efforts include 1) every school professional must be engaged in the work of improving student achievement in the four core subject areas, and 2) teachers must have more opportunities to learn, model, and practice new skills and receive feedback. Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) and PD 360 will be the primary means by which teachers will gain new skills and knowledge and receive feedback. PLC's engage the entire staff in professional dialogue, in the examination of student work; and in building of a shared understanding about practices that help all students to learn at high levels. PD 360 is an on-demand library of professional teacher development resources that uses technology to make learning more effective, differentiated and convenient. It offers tools and resources that support best practices. PD 360 will be a tool used to introduce new content or as a follow-up to content already delivered. It features many renowned educational consultants such as Schlechty and Marzano. Both PLC's and PD 360 will aid the staff in exploring the questions - What do we want students to learn? How will we know when they've learned? How will we respond when students are having difficulty?

AOS has a supportive administration, procedures in place, and a culture that will enhance implementation of its professional learning plan. Teachers have time during the school day to meet in grade level groups. They have a daily, 50-minute common preparation periods. Teachers also have a 30 minute, duty-free lunch during which collaboration can occur. Additionally, teachers convene twice-weekly ELA/Social Studies and Math/Science study groups after school. During this time, teachers analyze MEAP/MAP data; examine student work and seek to identify learning problems and solutions. They also discuss Individual Learning Cycles (ILC's) and develop common assessments that aid in reaching consensus on instructional priorities, curriculum pacing and assessment. Moreover, access to several types of resources has positioned AOS to be successful. At the beginning of the school year, staff participated in "PowerSchool" training. PowerSchool enables educators to make timely decisions that impact student performance while creating a collaborative environment for teachers, parents, and students to work together. PowerSchool enables parents to monitor children's progress and it encourages responsibility and accountability. Other resources in use include a PL calendar that has been developed collaboratively and a PL binder which will contain descriptive information, evaluations and a record of participation in professional learning activities. The AOS Title I Coordinator has assumed responsibility for informing staff about PL opportunities offered by AOS, ISD, the university and other agencies. The Coordinator also disseminates information about relevant state and national conferences. Additionally, the "trainer of trainer" model is in effect at AOS. Teachers who attend external trainings present information, share learnings, and lead activities that reinforce use of best practices. An Intervention Specialist provided by MSU, a School Improvement Facilitator from the ISD, and the MDE SRO Monitor will continue to provide technical assistance and support in refining and implementing the AOS PL plan. Throughout the school year and the summer, several methods will be used to document and evaluate the implementation of the professional learning plan. To document implementation, activity logs, a PL calendar, agendas, meeting minutes/reports; sign-in sheets, and compilations of evaluations of PL activities will be maintained. To evaluate the effect of professional learning activities on acquisition of skills and improved teacher practice, the Superintendent, the Principal and teachers themselves, will participate in data dialogues, walk-throughs, classroom observations, and curriculum alignment activities. They will review of lesson plans and report cards; assess student growth on formative and summative tests; analyze perception data and questionnaires administered to staff, students and parents. Data collected will be used to make PL plan adjustments and improvements.

Requirement #5: Implement strategies to recruit and retain staff with skills necessary to meet the needs of students in a transformational school. These can include strategies such as financial incentives, increased opportunities for promotion and career growth and more flexible work conditions.

Indicator 5A: In your response, identify the strategies the district will use to recruit teachers to this school based on student needs and assign teachers to this school based on student needs.

Indicator 5B: In your response, identify the strategies the district will use to retain teachers at this school.

Having a good teacher in each classroom is the foundation of a good school. Among other staffing challenges, even normal attrition requires

schools to be constantly on the lookout for good teachers. Therefore, the essence of the AOS recruitment program is not to hire just to fill a position, but rather to acquire the number and type of people necessary to meet then present and future needs of the students as well as succeed in a transformational school. AOS will implement several recruitment strategies to ensure that the teachers employed are aware of the critical, multiple needs of AOS students and are prepared to meet the challenges of teaching children who exhibit a wide range of skills and abilities. School administrators will first examine local data about turnover in specific subject areas, grade levels, and special need areas. Special emphasis will be given to attracting and recruiting teachers skilled in differentiating instruction and addressing student needs in ELA, mathematic and writing - AOS's high need areas. Where possible, the administration will identify successful, qualified substitute teachers and retired teachers and seek to hire them to fill full-time positions.

Teacher vacancies, along with the special skills required, will be posted inside the school, at nearby businesses and advertised using the internet, newspaper ads and job fairs. Relationships and linkages will be established with local teacher preparation programs operating at nearby colleges and universities (i.e., MSU, Wayne State, U of M, CMU, WCCCD, Baker College, etc.) These intuitions will receive job postings and kept apprised of the kinds of skill-sets and competencies prospective AOS teachers' need. Teachers are will be assigned to classrooms based on student need, their preferences and areas of strength. Competitive salaries will be offered. There will be opportunities for teachers to increase their salary levels when student achievement goals are met and the AOS instructional program is delivered with fidelity.

AOS will seek to retain teachers who

- are skilled and positive
- rated highly during teacher evaluations
- consistently raise student achievement
- successfully deliver the instructional program
- are willing to put in the time necessary to meet student needs

The AOS administration, in turn, will

- maintain a focus on student learning
- promote good working conditions (time for collaboration, PLC's, etc.)
- foster an atmosphere of collegial support (teacher-led workshops, coaching, mentoring)
- provide meaningful opportunities for involvement in school decision-making
- award flex time, release time and financial bonuses
- celebrate good teachers at staff meetings, Board meetings and community gatherings

A variety of professional learning opportunities will be provided and teachers will be encouraged to improve their practice. New teachers will have access to coaches and mentors. To build leadership capacity and promote career growth, leadership of PLC's, grade level teams, data teams, book study groups, and book selection committees will be encouraged. Attendance at national conferences and training seminars will be supported. Financial awards will be made to teachers who increase student achievement and assist in helping the school meet school level goals.

PART D: COMPREHENSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL REFORM STRATEGIES

Requirement #6: Use data to identify and implement an instructional program(s) that is based on research and aligned from one grade to the next, as well as with state academic standards.

Indicator 6A: In your response, detail the process the school used to select an instructional program. The process must address how the school used a diagnostic process that (a) used multiple data sources to understand priority designation, (b) links the instructional program to disaggregated data by subject, grade level, and subgroups, (c) identified and prioritized underlying causes of low student performance, (d) describe a three-year sequence for improving instruction in all content areas related to priority school designation.

Indicator 6B: In your response, describe your instructional program. The school's instructional program must: (a) reflect the "Big Ideas", (b) include specific teaching and learning strategies (Tier I) for school-wide implementation, (c) align with career & college ready standards, (d) be based on research, relevant data, and outcomes of data dialogue (if applicable), (e) provide an overview of the implementation timeline, resources, and staff responsible for implementation over three years, and (f) describe a plan to track adult implementation of instructional program

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for all content areas will serve as the foundation for instructional reforms at AOS. CCSS's are the culmination of extended, broad-based efforts to fulfill the charge issued by the state to create the next generation of K-12 standards. These next-generation standards have been developed, adopted and applied to help ensure that all students are college and career ready in all subjects by the end of high school. Therefore, the CCSS's, which articulate vertically across the grades and horizontally within content areas at each grade level, will provide a blueprint for ensuring that AOS students acquire the knowledge and skills needed to successfully compete with their peers at home and abroad. The AOS staff will use the CCSS, MEAP, MAP, the School Improvement Plan and our "Big Ideas" during collaboration and decision-making pertaining to the instructional program, strategies and activities that will be used to help improve student achievement. The AOS "Big Ideas" to be reflected in the instructional program include "engaging every school professional in the work of school improvement" and "providing teachers multiple professional opportunities to learn new skills; to model, practice these new skills; and to receive feedback."

School leaders, teachers and other stakeholders understand the reasons for AOS's identification as a Priority School. They have embraced processes that have been proven to improve teaching and learning and lead to increasing numbers of students graduating career and college ready. First, teachers and school leaders received training from a MSU Intervention Specialist on the Wellman & Lipton Data Driven Dialogue and Collaborative Inquiry. This training enabled the teachers to have healthy dialogue and discussions that involved eliciting predictions and assumptions about learners. Next, the staff utilized skills modeled in the training during daily grade level team meetings and cross-curricular K-8 staff meetings convened for ninety minutes monthly. The teachers also looked at the data from MEAP, MAP, curriculum tests and common assessments to determine what skills needed to be emphasized. When achievement data was disaggregated by grade and subgroups, and when the results of analyses of school process and perception data were reviewed, it was determined that increasing numbers of students were reading below their expected levels; many students lacked decoding skills and vocabulary skills; and poor writing and comprehension skills were impacting students' ability to master concepts in math, science and social studies. Additionally, disaggregated MEAP data indicated the existence of a significant difference in writing proficiency between males and females. Fourth and seventh grade females over 3 years, outscored their males counterparts by 50%. Similarly, over 3 years, students with disabilities scored substantially lower in writing and reading when compared to regular education students. Based on the data analyses, the "data digs" and understandings that emerged about the underlying causes of deficits exhibited by AOS students, the staff selected ELA as the area of primary focus. Further, teachers reported the need to learn strategies for differentiating instruction to accommodate the wide range of skill levels exhibited by K-8 students in core subjects.

To address identified teaching and learning needs, the staff will implement school wide initiatives aimed at increasing student skills in
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vocabulary, comprehension and writing. Teachers using common instructional routines and strategies implemented across grade levels and content areas can be very powerful. Therefore, during the initial year of plan implementation, professional learning and classroom activities will focus on increasing teacher skill and knowledge, particularly as it relates to ELA. PD 360 and PLC's will be used to enhance professional learning in ELA. Emphasis will be placed on using common, researched-based ELA routines. To improve students' vocabulary development, teachers have selected Marzano's Academic Vocabulary-a six-step process for direct instruction. According to recent research, direct vocabulary instruction can have a sizable impact on a student's ability to comprehend content.

During the first year, ELA teachers will receive primary focus, with focus on the content teachers to follow in Year 2 and Year 3. All teachers will be trained using PD 360. PD 360 is an online professional development tool that allows educators instant access to the best presenters and practices in education. In addition, the teachers will be trained using Marzano's Academic Vocabulary. They will also receive support in establishing and increasing the effectiveness of PLC's. During the second and third years of TP implementation, training will be extended and expanded to address teacher needs and student needs in core subjects as evidenced on local assessment tests, data dialogues, teacher feedback sessions, grade level and curriculum planning sessions. Professional Learning activities around vocabulary, writing and differentiation will be ongoing, job-embedded and promote shared understanding of data use, routines and direct instruction to promote achievement. AOS wants to ensure that all students can read and learn from academic text and learn from content in textbooks and literature. Supporting and monitoring this transformation work will be the AOS Superintendent, the Principal, the SI (Leadership) Team, the ISD, the SRO Monitor and staff from Central MI University, the AOS Authorizer. The Principal will have primary responsibility for conducting walkthroughs and observations, using achievement summaries, monitoring checklists and team collaborative dialogues as tools and resources in tracking and evaluating adult implementation of the instructional program and insuring that transformation plans are being implemented as intended.

Requirement #7: Promote the continuous use of student data (such as formative, interim, and summative assessment data and student work) to inform and differentiate instruction to meet academic needs of individual students.

Indicator 7A: In your response, describe how the school promotes the continuous use of individual student data (such as; formative, interim, and summative). This plan must: (a) outline expectations for regular and on-going building-wide use of data, (b) describe the structure and process for educators to collaborate to analyze data and plan for Tier II and Tier III instruction, and (c) identifies instructional program outcomes and a plan to assess for impact

The Academy of Southfield collects and utilizes a variety of formative, interim and summative student data to inform instruction. Effective use of data supports the type of high-quality, scientifically based, and differentiated instruction that is expected of the AOS teaching staff. The school's assessment schedule provides for building-wide, systematic and continuous collection of data from a number of sources. Assessment results provide the feedback needed to adjust teaching and aid students' achievement of learning targets. For example, the DIBELS test is administered three times per year to early elementary students. DIBELS is given at the beginning of the school year to provide the teachers with baseline scores. Instructional levels can then be identified; groups can be formed; and instruction delivered - all based on data. Data from subsequent testing periods provides additional student performance information that is timely and can be used for instructional decision-making. The NWEA MAP Test is administered three times per year to students in grades 2 through 8. This computer-adaptive test is a valuable assessment tool that is used for tracking student growth. The data collected provides information to assist teachers in monitoring students' progress; screening for difficulties and differentiating instruction. The NWEA test results also identify the concepts a student has mastered and which skills need further work.

The MEAP Test is administered to 3rd through 8th students in April. It provides reading, writing and math data for all grade levels; science data for 4th and 7th graders; and social studies data for 8th graders. MEAP assesses the mastery of grade-level content expectations. Teachers use this data to individualize and pace instruction; target students' skill deficits; and provide opportunities for students to apply problem-solving, writing, and critical thinking skills - the skills required of career and college ready students. Interim/benchmark tests are

administered by classroom teachers frequently throughout the year. These less formal tests monitor student proficiency and check for student understanding. Data collected provide teachers with information for re-teaching, improving instruction, and following up with students in need of further assistance. Examples of interim/benchmark tests include unit and chapter tests; teacher-made tests; examinations of student work using rubrics, and common assessments.

Data gathered during AOS assessment activities will be analyzed and discussed at meetings of grade level teams, content teams and during common preparation periods. At these regularly-scheduled teacher team meetings, data will be used to identify strategies, interventions and resources. Similarly, during PLC meetings, staff works collaboratively to analyze data and improve their classroom practice. PLC colleagues continuously examine data; seek and share learnings; and then act on what they learn. In some cases, the data will indicate a need for more intensive instruction or intervention. AOS support staff also make continuous use of data to meet the needs of Title I students, special needs students, struggling students and those with behavior management problems. Teachers and support staff will be encouraged to chart relevant data and share it with students. This strategy gets students involved in their learning; helps when students are asked to set learning goals; and it helps them to monitor their own progress and accept responsibility for their learning.

Professional Development will be provided to AOS staff in order to increase skill and knowledge related to use of formative, summative and benchmark assessments to inform instruction. The MSU Interventionist, Oakland ISD consultants/coaches and the MDE Monitor will continue to provide ongoing support for the school's PD activities. Staff recently participated in the Lipton & Wellman Data Dialogue training. At the training workshops, the MSU Interventionist helped teachers learn about, understand and work with AOS school data. Throughout the school year and during the summer, follow-up, data-focused professional learning sessions will continue during weekly staff meetings, professional development days, and during on-site teacher trainings. Teachers will become skilled at using data to differentiate instruction, track and assess impact, and drive continuous improvement at AOS. Professional learning activities that include data conversations, collaboration and action planning will enable staff to achieve instructional outcomes in reading, writing and vocabulary development, areas where student proficiency levels are not where they need to be.

As stated previous in 6A & 6B, the AOS "Big Ideas" will be reflected in the instructional program. These "Big Ideas" include "engaging every school professional in the work of school improvement" and providing teachers multiple professional opportunities to learn new skills; to model, practice these new skills; and to receive feedback. PD 360, PLC's, walkthroughs, observations and evaluations will aid in the realization of the school's "Big Ideas." The reform model to be used involves a direct instruction model. Extensive training and in-classroom follow-up will insure that the direct instruction program model is being implemented effectively. Students will be assessed frequently and staff will examine student work on a regular basis. Special focus will be placed on closing the achievement gap between males and females and special needs students. AOS wants to ensure that all students can read, comprehend and learn from textbooks and literature. Therefore, direct instruction, along with continuous use of data, PLC's and PD 306 will be at the heart of the reforms at AOS. They will be the strategies and resources used to differentiate instruction; meet individual student needs; and track and assess program impact.

PART E: INCREASED LEARNING TIME AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Requirement #8: Establish schedules and strategies that provide increased time for instruction in core academic subjects, enrichment activities, and professional learning for teachers.

Indicator 8A: In your response, describe the district's plan for increasing time for core academic subjects that specifies: (a) whether additional time will happen through a longer day, week, and/or year OR redesigning the use of the current schedule (choose one); (b) a description of how much time has been allocated; (c) a rationale that supports why these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

Indicator 8B: In your response, describe the district's plan for increasing time for enrichment activities that specifies: (a) whether additional time will happen through a longer day, week, and/or year OR redesigning the use of the current schedule (choose one); (b) a description of how much time has been allocated; (c) a rationale that supports why these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

Indicator 8C: In your response, describe the district's plan for increasing time for professional collaboration that specifies: (a) whether additional time will happen through a longer day, week, and/or year OR redesigning the use of the current schedule (choose one); (b) a description of how much time has been allocated; (c) a rationale that supports why these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

The Academy of Southfield has redesigned and reallocated time in the current schedule. This redesign/re-allocation will increase students' academic learning time in the core subject areas as well as maximize teachers' opportunities to work collaboratively to plan and improve instruction. The increase in classroom learning time will be accomplished by reducing teacher preparation time from 60 minutes to 50 minutes daily and adding these minutes to daily instructional time. Instructional time in core subjects will be increased by 30 minutes daily, 150 minutes weekly and 1,110 minutes per year. To further maximize student learning time, a "Reading Buddies" Program will be established during a 10-minute time period formerly devoted to lunch and/or recess. During "Buddies Time" an older student reads to a younger one. Teacher preparation time, though reduced, will be more focused; used more productively; and support more directly the needs of AOS students in core subjects. Similarly, lunch/recess becomes more structured and provides time to nurture learning; stimulate interest in books; enhance vocabulary and language skill development.

Analyses of student achievement data, school process data and perception data all indicate that increasing numbers of AOS students are reading below their expected levels; many students lack decoding skills and vocabulary skills; and poor writing and comprehension skills are impacting students' ability to master concepts in reading, math, science and social studies. Additionally, teachers and school leaders have indicated a need for more information, training and resources to address the range of skills and abilities exhibited by students in the core subject areas. The redesigned schedule will provide increased time for student/teacher conferencing; for actively engaging students; checking for understanding; and personalizing instruction. Further, proposed plans for the restructuring of planning time will provide more opportunities to collaboratively plan and reflect on lessons, analyze and respond to student data, master new content and hone instructional skills. Teachers will also learn about or observe instructional strategies, set goals for improvement, and give and receive feedback on instruction.

Recent studies show that children's psychological growth and school performance can be enhanced by a focus on creative activities. Creative enrichment activities can expand on students' learning especially when staff use methods that differ from those used during the school day. Therefore, to further extend and promote student learning, AOS will operate a 16 week extended-day Academic Enrichment Program beginning December, 2014. Students will be tutored in reading, writing and math four days a week for one hour. Teachers will utilize assessment data and teacher recommendations to select students for the program. They will use interactive, engaging activities and materials to promote learning. To provide motivation and incentives for regular attendance, students will also be able to participate in recreational activities, games, technology and other fun activities of their choosing.

Currently, there are structures in place at AOS that promote professional collaboration and professional learning at AOS. Teachers meet together for 45 minutes on Tuesdays and Thursday. They also have common, 60-minute planning periods daily (soon to be reduced to 50 minutes, as described above.) During these time periods, the work of PLC's are conducted and learning conversations focus on math, reading, science and social studies. Time is also devoted to learning best practices for differentiating instruction; sharing cross-curricular strategies; using data to make instructional decisions; and conducting committee work.

Students at AOS have exhibited critical, multiple needs in the area of reading, math, vocabulary and core subject areas. It is understood that time is an important variable in the quest to improve student achievement. The current school schedule has been restructured and time reallocated resulting in a significant increase in instructional time. Furthermore, time has been added for academic enrichment activities and professional collaboration. By leveraging the expanded time in this way, it is expected that teachers will be empowered and instruction will be strengthened.

Requirement #9: Provide ongoing mechanisms for engagement of families and community.

Indicator 9A: In your response, describe multiple strategies to engage families in reform efforts.

Indicator 9B: In your response, describe multiple strategies to engage community partners in reform efforts.

Academy of Southfield has implemented numerous strategies for continuous engagement of families and community. AOS staff will extend and expand these strategies so that they reflect the "Big Ideas" from the school's Redesign/Reform Plan as well as support the needs identified during CNA and MEAP/MAP data analysis. Engagement activities will also support student learning goals included in AOS's Title 1 and School Improvement Plans. They are intended to better prepare students to learn and their families to support that learning.

The multiple strategies that will continue to be used throughout the school year to engage families in reform and school improvement efforts include: Parent/Family Orientations; Title 1 Meetings; Parent Involvement Committee Meetings; Parent /Teacher Conferences; PTO Meetings; Open House; student performances, exhibits and awards ceremonies; math and language arts workshops. These meetings, conferences and workshops have been designed using input from parents and family members themselves, and scheduled at times and locations to maximize participation. Engagement activities often place parents and family members inside the schools in classrooms and provide opportunities for participation in school decision -making and problem-solving. Parents and family members are notified of engagement events through newsletters, flyers, brochures, and the AOS website. Parent Connect is another vehicle used to communicate actively with parents and family members and keep them involved in children's learning. It is an on-line program that provides parents secured Internet access to information about their child (assignments, attendance, grades earned, homework, etc.). Student of the Month Awardees, Prize Patrol Awardees, invitations to presentations and ceremonies are also a part of the information shared on Parent Connect.

AOS also has a longstanding commitment to the community partnership approach as evidenced by the connections made on behalf of children with business, faith-based and community organizations. Junior Achievement has been partnering with AOS for approximately ten years. The JA program for grades K-5 includes a Blitz Day where the students spend a day with JA instructors. The students are taught entrepreneurial skills geared to their respective grade levels. Middle school students participate in a field trip to the Quicken Loans Finance Park where they learn financial literacy skills during class sessions conducted by Quicken Loan staff. As a part of a partnership program with the Providence Presbyterian Church, the church donates book bags to the students at the beginning of the year. During the winter, mittens, hats and scarves are donated to the school for needy students. At the end of the school year, an appreciation luncheon is held for the volunteers and community partners who empower and enrich the lives of children through AOS school community partnership efforts. These parent-family-community partners have helped to create a climate and culture at school that is engaging, positive and student-centered.

A Reform Committee comprised of business partners, parents, teachers and school leaders will be another mechanism used to actively engage parents and other stakeholders in AOS reform efforts. This Committee will also address and how to recruit and involve more business partners and parents in the life of the school. Most important, the Reform Committee will play a key role in connecting the school community to the implementation of AOS's "big Ideas" - "engaging every school professional in the work of school improvement" and

"providing teachers multiple professional opportunities to learn new skills; to model, practice these new skills; and to receive feedback. PD 360, PLC's and direct instruction strategies applied to the teaching of vocabulary, reading and writing, are the resources and approaches to be used to realize AOS's "Big Ideas". During monthly Reform Committee meetings, the group will discuss ways to become an integral part of PLC's and aid students in improving their reading and writing skills. Of key importance will be devising ways to increase parents involvement in their child's learning. All of the research conducted around parent involvement underscores how important it is to engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities at home. MEAP and MAP trend data indicate that K-8 students at AOS continue to need assistance in interpreting informational test, understanding vocabulary and writing effectively. The work of the Reform Committee, particularly parents, can aid in stemming the tide of students' poor performance in ELA and other core academic subjects.

Finally, the Reform Committee will assume some of the responsibility for informing stakeholders of the progress that the school is making in implementing reform plans and providing necessary training, workshops and other experiences designed to increase parental and community involvement in children's education. Keeping parents and other stakeholders informed has the huge potential of making positive differences not only in children's education, but also in building the kind of rapport with parents and community that is so vital to students' success. The Reform Committee can also be instrumental in helping AOS to continue to recruit additional community partners and linkages that are currently being sought with law enforcement, health and social agencies, local corporations and small businesses. These potential partners will be encouraged to participate in school decision-making and policy development and contribute to making student learning more relevant and connected to real life.

PART F: PROVIDING OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY AND SUSTAINED SUPPORT

Requirement #10: The district is providing the school with operational flexibility for issues such as staffing, calendars, time, and budgeting to implement a comprehensive approach to substantially increase student achievement and increase graduation rate.

Indicator 10A: Describe how Operational Flexibility will be provided to the building in the following areas: staffing, use of time, professional learning, and budget. Also, describe a statement that the priority school improvement team and building leader will determine the school's Title I budget (subject to federal regulations). The district must also complete a signature page, signed by the Superintendent, School Board President, and Union Representative, which certifies that the school has the autonomy required to implement the plan as written (see template on AdvancEd site). Finally the district must upload either an Executed Addendum to the collective bargaining agreement OR a Memorandum of Understanding that commits the Superintendent, School Board President, and Union Representative to negotiate an addendum by August 1, 2014.

Academy of Southfield is a single building, public school academy that is self-managed. As such, the AOS Superintendent and the Board provide the school with operational flexibility to implement programs, address operational issues, and solve problems at the school level. This School Improvement Team, a building level team comprised of teacher-leaders, content teachers, the building principal, parent representatives and the superintendent, generate ideas, make recommendations and participate in school improvement decision-making. The School Improvement Team meets regularly and plan collaboratively to address matters related to staffing, use of time, professional learning, the Title I budget and classroom issues.

Having a highly-qualified skilled and competent teacher in every classroom is the foundation of a good school. Fortunately, at AOS, staffing decisions related to course assignments, grade level assignments, membership on teacher teams and committees are determined at the building level. Teachers are assigned to classrooms based on student need, teacher strengths and teacher preferences. Staffing levels are decided in collaboration with the Superintendent, the principal and the teachers, themselves.

The school also has the flexibility to create its own calendar including length of day and the length of the school year. Planning begins early in the school year. All of the decisions made meet state minimums and legislative criteria. During staff meetings and School Improvement Team Meetings, decisions are made collaboratively relative to teaching schedules; teacher planning time; team meeting times; dates and times for professional development; after-school classes; academic enrichment classes, summer programs and other special school events. The calendar is then published and communicated to staff, parents, and other stakeholders.

Staff recognizes the importance of Professional Learning and its connection to successful implementation of the AOS reforms. At the school level, a professional learning plan has been developed to promote changes in teacher practice and produce high levels of learning for students. Early in the school year, the staff researched professional learning opportunities that were job-embedded, on-going and differentiated. Together, staff first reviewed the AOS Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA); achievement trend data; and examined existing plans (Title I, SIP, etc.) Teacher teams then participated in professional dialogues and data digs. During these sessions the AOS "Big Ideas" emerged that will guide and align the school's Professional Learning efforts. These Big Ideas are: 1) every school professional must be engaged in the work of improving student achievement in the four core subject areas, and 2) teachers must have more opportunities to learn, model, and practice new skills and receive feedback. It was decided that Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) and PD 360 will be the sources by which teachers will gain new skills and knowledge, receive feedback, improve their practice and substantially improve student achievement at AOS. Consultants are currently being identified and dates scheduled for PD 360 training, PLC meetings, and other professional development needs. Conversations with the Oakland ISD recently resulted in access to a Mathematics Consultant and a variety of math resources. The AOS administration, the ISD and MDE are very supportive of professional learning. Procedures are in place and there is a culture at AOS that will enhance implementation of the school's professional learning plan.

The Superintendent and Principal have primary oversight of Title I and other program budgets at AOS. However they seek input and
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collaborate with the School Improvement Team in determining how funds should be allocated. The Team's input is focused squarely on and aligned with school needs and priorities. These needs and priorities are identified in the Title I Plan, the School Improvement Plan and in the AOS Redesign Plan. The Team's goal is to allocate funding sufficient to hire needed staff; support the implementation of best practices; purchase necessary instructional materials; support professional learning and parent involvement activities. Quality programs for students is at the forefront of all AOS school-level budgetary decision making.

Requirement #11: The school and district will ensure that the school receives ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support from the district, ISD, Michigan Department of Education, or other designated external partners or organizations.

Indicator 11A: In your response, describe how the district plans to access and provide supports for the school.

Indicator 11B: In your response, list the central office contact person responsible for monitoring and supporting the school.

The Leadership at Academy of Southfield understands the importance of ongoing, intensive technical assistance, professional learning and related support and their relationship to improved academic outcomes. The Principal and Superintendent participate alongside teachers in workshops, training sessions, meetings with consultants, and join in the collaborations that occur at monthly school improvement team meetings. The school leadership is therefore committed to school reform and enthusiastically seek access to resources and supports available from its partners at the Oakland ISD, Michigan State University, Central Michigan University and the Michigan Department of Education. These partners are adept at providing a variety of technical assistance, instructional and professional development resources. The leadership at AOS continues to seek additional external partners that may be available locally and regionally to provide capacity-building information; share evidence-based practices; and provide assistance in adapting and sustaining school-wide reforms.

AOS requested from the Oakland ISD and now receives the services of a site-based School Improvement Facilitator (SIF). The site-based SIF has been very involved in providing technical assistance, information and support. She attends and actively participates in school improvement team meetings, curriculum alignment meetings and data workshops. She also serves as a member of the MI-Excel School Support Team. The SIF has provided the staff with excellent advice and timely guidance during each stage of AOS's Priority School planning. She has established excellent rapport with the Academy teacher-leaders and has become an invaluable asset.

The AOS Principal and Superintendent communicate regularly with the site-based SIF and encourages her to participate in all of the school's transformation efforts. Additionally, the school leadership collaborates with the Oakland ISD School Improvement Facilitator who provides guidance, resources and support in the area of school improvement. She also leads the MI-Excel School Support Team meetings and supports the work of our site-based SIF. Together, the Oakland ISD Facilitator and the site-based Facilitator work in partnership with the administration and teacher-leaders in reform planning and implementation. The Facilitators bring insight and instructional experience to our conversations. They work at their respective levels to ensure that the school conducts required activities and receives the necessary assistance.

AOS is also benefiting from the services and resources of an Intervention Specialist (IS) provided by Michigan State University. Building-level data dialogues have been conducted for the AOS staff by the IS. The IS has begun the work needed to aid the staff in developing a deeper awareness and understanding of all relevant student achievement and school improvement data. Ultimately, this work will lead to more rapid changes and successful implementation of reforms at the building level.

Professional Learning opportunities that are job embedded and ongoing are a part of the AOS Professional Learning Plan. The Oakland ISD-SIF, the site-based SIF and the Intervention Specialist are all working collaboratively in support of the professional learning plan. Similarly, the Principal and Superintendent are working closely with the IS, the MDE School Reform Office and CMU to identify a variety of technical assistance and professional development resources. Very recently, a math consultant was provided to AOS by the Oakland ISD to aid in upgrading instruction in the area of mathematics. In cooperation with teacher-leaders and the Principal, this math support was arranged by an Oakland ISD Mathematics Project Leader. Grant funds from a Regional grant awarded to the Oakland ISD are being used to provide this valuable service to math content teachers. AOS hopes to continue with the services of a math consultant for the 2015-2016

school year and beyond. It is anticipated that continued collaboration with ISD, CMU, MDE and other external partners will lead to increased participation in workshops, conferences, and grant funded training offered not only by our partners, but by other organizations especially in the core subject areas where students need to exhibit improved academic outcomes.

The AOS Principal is the primary contact and is responsible for supporting and monitoring the school's transformation efforts. However, the Principal, the Superintendent, teacher-leaders and other stakeholders understand the need for a rapid turnaround at AOS. They realize that its partners can be a great source of support as the school seeks to close the achievement gap.